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SUBJECT: ZAGREB DAILY ACTIVITY REPORT: JANUARY 11, 2010

REF: A. ZAGREB 0016  
B. ZAGREB 0009

**11. (U) IVO JOSIPOVIC WINS PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS:**

Ivo Josipovic, candidate of the main opposition Social Democratic Party, won the run-off election on January 10, garnering 60 percent of the vote to defeat Milan Bandic and become Croatia's third president. Josipovic won an outright majority in 19 of 20 counties and all major urban areas, including the capital of Zagreb where Bandic is currently mayor. Turnout was 2,253,553 or 50.1% of registered voters. Josipovic will be sworn in as president at noon on February 18. Additional details reported ref A.

**12. (U) PM KOSOR POPULARITY SURGES:**

Polls conducted immediately after Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor engineered the expulsion of former Prime Minister Ivo Sanader from the ruling the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) on January 4(ref B) show that Kosor has now overtaken current President Stjepan Mesic as the most popular Croatian politician. Furthermore, the approval rating of the government has jumped considerably from 39 percent in early December 2009 to over 55 percent in the first week of January 2010. Of those polled, 84 percent think that Kosor is doing a better job than Sanader as PM, and over 75 percent think that Sanader is corrupt. Kosor's popularity was on full display at an HDZ rally in Sanader's hometown of Split over the weekend commemorating the 20th anniversary of the HDZ. Kosor was greeted with rapturous applause and chanting, while Sanader's name was not mentioned at all throughout the ceremony.

**13. (SBU) USKOK CONFIRMS BANDIC CORRUPTION INVESTIGATIONS:**

In reaction to media reports on January 8 that the Prosecutor's Office for Suppression of Organized Crime and Corruption (USKOK) is investigating 21 cases against then presidential candidate and current Zagreb mayor Milan Bandic, an USKOK spokesman confirmed that some ongoing corruption investigations include Bandic, but far less than the media was reporting. He added that there were no investigations of Bandic's presidential opponent (now president-elect) Ivo Josipovic. Police refused to comment on the story. Our contacts in the prosecutor's office have told post that the cases that involve Bandic are at a very basic stage and prosecutors are nowhere near deciding whether to indict him. They added that they felt compelled to issue the clarifying statement prior to the election to rebut inaccurate media reports that USKOK was preparing to indict Bandic.

**14. (U) MESIC CONDUCTS OFFICIAL VISIT TO KOSOVO:**

On January 8 President Mesic conducted an official visit to Kosovo. In an address to the Kosovar parliament, Mesic noted that "my visit to Kosovo is not directed against anyone." He emphasized that his trip was intended to strengthen bilateral relations between Croatia and Kosovo as well as contribute to the stability and security of the entire region. Mesic stated that: "I have arrived in Kosovo as a friend of this young state, as well as of all its citizens, both Kosovars and Serbs." Mesic said that

although Serbia did not have to recognize Kosovo, Serbia would sooner or later have to establish a modus vivendi with Kosovo because of the Serbs living there. The press reported that Mesic said cooperation with Serbia was important to Croatia, and that Zagreb was interested in further development of relations with Belgrade. Mesic also noted that he was visiting Croatian troops participating in KFOR.

WALKER